

1997

GENERAL

1. Khrushchev to Visit Cuba and Possibly Mexico: Khrushchev will pay an "official visit" to Cuba after his trip to New York for the opening of the UN General Assembly on 20 September, according to [REDACTED]

Khrushchev's presence in Cuba might prompt anti-Communist, anti-Castro demonstrations in Havana and other Cuban cities. He may use the occasion to announce the conclusion of a Soviet-Cuban arms deal and the extension of further credits to Cuba as a demonstration of Soviet support for the Castro regime.

A Soviet merchant ship, the Ilya Mechnikov, arrived in Cuba on 8 September with Moscow's first major arms delivery to the Castro regime. The ship loaded more than 4,000 tons of "varied" cargo at Nikolaev, the Soviet Black Sea arms-export port, and is now unloading in East Havana under strict security precautions. Trucks lined up at Cabana Fortress are to remove the cargo to Las Villas Province in central Cuba.

The Soviet Embassy official also stated that Khrushchev "might stop off in Mexico," but that he has no plans to visit Argentina or any other South American country. There have been reports that both the Soviet ambassador in Buenos Aires and First Deputy Chairman Kosygin, who headed the USSR's delegation to the Argentine sesquicentennial celebrations in May, have tried to arrange an exchange of visits between Khrushchev and Argentine President Frondizi.

According to a Mexican radiobroadcast of 7 September, the Soviet ambassador to Mexico, who returned from a month's vacation in the USSR the day before, has announced he will call a press conference shortly "to discuss the trip which Khrushchev plans to make to Mexico."

Official Mexican reception of Khrushchev would probably be correct but cool. The Lopez Mateos government had indicated that Khrushchev's presence at the mid-September celebrations of the 150th anniversary of Mexican independence would be unwelcome, by requesting that delegations be headed by officials of no higher rank than vice president [REDACTED]